

CPYRGHT

# Smart Set

**Cholly Knickerbocker Says:**

## THE INSIDE STORY of why the

Peruvian government confiscated part of the whaling fleet of Greek shipping tycoon Aristotle Socrates Onassis is believe-it-or-not stuff. Actually this is how it happened:

A German sailor of the almost completely German-manned fleet wrote his frau not to worry about the Peruvian threats, that they were in fine shape, had been catching whales outside the 200-mile limit, that two of the ships had even ventured within the limit and had not been disturbed by the Peruvians, and that they would be coming home in a few days anyway.

A German reporter got hold of the housewife and printed a story that the Peruvian government was full of bluff, and that the Germans were catching whales at will in their waters.

The same afternoon the story was reproduced in the Peruvian press. And it happened that same evening in Lima the President of Peru was entertaining at the Palace, and among the guests were three members of the opposition party. These gentlemen taunted the President in front of all the guests, saying that the honor of Peru had been offended by the Germans.

On the spot, the President grabbed the phone and ordered his Navy to bring back the whaling skippers dead or alive. Two destroyers, which ironically had been sold to Peru by Onassis, who bought them from Canada, set off like an avenging armada—in an action that may go down in history as the Battle of the Blubber. They closed in on the Onassis fleet and fired several salvos, hitting one of the vessels.

Some of the whalers escaped, but most were confiscated and held until Onassis—or, rather, Lloyds of London, with whom he was insured—paid a \$3,000,000 fine.

And all this started only because of the indiscretion of a little German hausfrau!

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